

Residents get set for another test of spelling prowess

By CHRISTINE WALSH
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DUXBURY — Even with only one member returning from last year's championship team, the Valiant Villagers will be the orthographers to beat in Duxbury's Community Spelling Bee.

New team member William Cloney isn't confident about the Duxbury Village residents' ability to repeat as spelling champs, but he said there'll be no lack of effort. He said the team will be hitting the books this week, and keeping a close eye on the competition.

"Oh, sure, we'll try to repeat, but I doubt very much that we will," Cloney said. "I assume everyone will be gunning for the Village."

Throughout town, residents are abuzz about the bee. Last year's ended when the Duxbury Village team, then called the Venerable Villagers, correctly spelled "philippic."

Last year's community spelling bee was Duxbury's first.

This year's bee will be held at 7 p.m. next Tuesday in the high school gymnasium. The proceeds will benefit the Duxbury Education Foundation, a citizens group that awards grants for educational programs.

The 1999 bee raised \$15,000, and bee co-chairwoman Jane Wallace expects a repeat performance.

Fifty-six teams made of three members each pay \$300 to participate in the bee. This year, businesses can become Hive Sponsors by donating \$500.

Wallace said she's heard a lot of chatter about the bee.

"I think one of the best things is that people are really getting enthusiastic about the names of their teams," she said.

The entrants include the Bibliobees (library trustees), the Lexophiles (a group of high school students), and

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Whose, Hooz, Who's on First (Duxbury Youth Baseball board members).

Teams are encouraged to wear costumes; the one that's most creatively dressed will win a prize.

Dawn Habgood of Duxbury said her team, Bee Mine, doesn't plan to dress up.

"We're rather quiet and shy that way," she said. "I do happen to know that there are a few teams who will be in rather outrageous garb."

The Bee Mine members have divided up the words on a list provided to the participants, so each member will have an expertise.

"What's amusing is the way in which different teams study for this," Habgood said. "I heard about one team checking definitions. They will know exactly how the words are going to be pronounced."

Judi Rogozenski of Duxbury will be a member of the Demos Consulting Group's Three Demosketeers, as she was last year. She said the team has been studying and hopes to win.

"We're really taking this on as a challenge," she said.

Participants say they're happy to help the education foundation, regardless of how they fare in the bee.

"I think it's a terrific way to support the town and schools," said Rogozenski, whose daughter Dana is a junior at Duxbury High School. "We're just having a lot of fun with it."

Before the bee, a dinner of alphabet soup donated by the Catered Affair will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The cost for adults is \$5; for senior citizens and children, \$3.

Slots for three teams are still available. Entry forms can be obtained at the library and can be sent to Wendy Bicknell at 66 Seabury Point Road.